

Remarks:

In response to the restriction requirement, the applicant elects without traverse claims 1-6. Claims 7-12 are withdrawn from consideration.

The abstract is amended to conform with the requirements of 37 CFR § 1.72(b). No new matter is introduced.

Without waiver of the doctrine of equivalents, claims 1-6 are amended to correct the claim numbering by removing the “A” reference designations.

Regarding the objection to claim 2, the applicant respectfully disagrees with the examiner’s requirement to narrow the claim by amending “standard” to read “stand.” One definition for “standard” is “a pedestal, stand, or base.” Houghton Mifflin Company, American Heritage Dictionary (2d coll. ed. 1985). Another suitable definition is “a structure built for or serving as a base or support for something.” Merriam-Webster Inc., Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged (2002). These definitions correspond with the use of the term in the specification. U.S. 10/671,222 at p. 2 l. 17, p. 3 l. 8, p. 4 l. 17, p. 5 ll. 4, 6, 8, 19, p. 6 l. 6. Hence, claim 2 as originally filed is consistent with and supported by the specification. As the examiner asserts no basis for the objection, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the objection.

The examiner has rejected claims 1-5 as being anticipated by Hisatomi (U.S. 5,177,890). The examiner asserts that the Hisatomi discloses a web structure with a mesh fabric attached thereto. Hisatomi discloses a plurality of horizontal support strips 24 and a plurality of vertical support strips 22 which form a web structure. Hisatomi discloses rigid panel pieces 28 which are selectively attached to individual nodes within the web structure to form patterns on the web structure. Although Hisatomi refers to the web structure as a net with a mesh surface, Hisatomi does not disclose a mesh fabric attached to the web structure. Rather, Hisatomi’s web structure contains a large number of horizontal and vertical support

strips so as to constitute a mesh. Claim 1 of the applicant's invention, by contrast, requires a separate mesh fabric attached to the web of horizontal and vertical support strips. Thus, claim 1 is not anticipated by Hisatomi.

Without waiver of the doctrine of equivalents, claim 1 is amended to correct an informality and to more distinctly identify the applicant's invention.

Claim 6 was rejected as unpatentable over Hisatomi in view of Specht (U.S. 5,661,944). In view of the arguments above with respect to claim 1, applicant submits this rejection is improper.

Claim 6 was rejected as unpatentable over Long (U.S. 5,407,178) in view of Specht. However, amended claim 1 requires at least three horizontal support strips, which is not disclosed by Long. Claim 6 is thus believed to be patentably distinct.

Reconsideration of these claims in light of the arguments herein is respectfully requested.

In summary, claims 1-6 are pending in the application. Applicant believes the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-6 in light of the arguments herein and passage to issue is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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